REMARKS

Applicants hereby offer preliminary amendments to the present application to place the application in better form for allowance.

Applicants have canceled Claims 1-13 in favor of replacement Claims 14-27 to correct certain informalities (including removal of preferences or addition of new claims for such preferences) and to clarify the intended meaning of the claims. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are fully supported in the specification.

Applicants have amended the specification to change the title to correspond to the English version of the title appearing on the International Application and to capitalize all letters in the title. Applicants submit that these amendments serve only to clarify their application and do not alter the scope of their disclosure.

Applicants have added an Abstract that summarizes the subject matter of their invention. A copy of the new Abstract is separately attached.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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ANNOTATED VERSION OF AMENDMENTS

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The title at page 1, line 1, has been changed from "**Nonfelting wool and antifelt finishing process**" to

--WOOL WITH ANTIFELT FINISH AND
METHOD FOR PROVIDING AN ANTIFELT FINISH--

IN THE CLAIMS:

The heading for the claims at page 20 , line 1 has been changed from "**Claims**" to --WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:--

Claims 1-13 have been canceled in favor of replacement Claims 14-27.

--14. A nonfelting wool obtained by a process comprising exposing wool to

(a) a plasma in a pretreatment, followed by

(b) optionally, an aqueous dispersion of self-dispersing isocyanates,

(c) a softener, and

(d) optionally, an antislip agent.

15. A nonfelting wool obtained by a process comprising exposing wool to

(a) a plasma in a pretreatment, followed by

(b) an aqueous dispersion of self-dispersing isocyanates,

(c) a softener, and

(d) optionally, an antislip agent.

16. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 14 wherein the wool is raw wool obtained after a raw wool scour, dyed or undyed wool slubbing, or a dyed or undyed wool yarn, knit, or cloth.

17. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 14 wherein the self-dispersing isocyanate has an isocyanate content of 1 to 25% by weight, reckoned as NCO (having a molecular weight of 42 g/mol), and is obtained by reaction in any order of

(I) organic polyisocyanates having an average NCO functionality of 1.8 to 4.2 with

(II) polyalkylene oxide alcohols, amines, and/or thiols of the formula (1)

R^1R^2N-$(CHX\text{-}CHY\text{-}O)_n$-CHX-CHY-ZH (1)

wherein

n is 3 to 70,

X and Y are hydrogen or methyl, with the proviso that when one of X and Y is methyl the other of X and Y must be hydrogen,

R^1 and R^2 are independently straight-chain or branched C_1-C_6-alkyl radicals or straight-chain or branched C_1-C_6-acyl radicals, with the proviso that if R^1 is a straight-chain or branched C_1-C_6-acyl radical, R^2 can also be hydrogen, or R^1 and R^2 may combine to form a -$(CH_2)_m$- alkylene radical where m is 4, 5, 6, or 7, wherein one or two CH_2 groups can be replaced by O and/or NH and/or one or two CH_2 groups can be substituted by methyl, and

Z is O, S, or NH,

(III) optionally, further NCO-reactive compounds containing anionic, cationic, and/or potentially anionic or cationic groups, and

(IV) optionally, further auxiliary and additive substances.

18. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 17 wherein the organic polyisocyanate is a unmodified aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic, or aromatic isocyanate having an average NCO functionality of 1.8 to 4.2.

19. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 17 wherein the polyalkylene oxide alcohol, amine, and/or thiol contains on average 6 to 60 alkylene oxide units per molecule.

20. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 19 wherein the polyalkylene oxide alcohol, amine, and/or thiol is a polyethylene oxide/propylene oxide alcohol, amine, and/or thiol.

21. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 19 wherein the polyethylene oxide/propylene oxide alcohol, amine, and/or thiol contains not less than 60 mol% of ethylene oxide units, based on the sum total of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide units.

22. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 17 wherein the NCO-reactive compound is

(i) a hydroxyl- or amino-functional compound having tertiary amino groups,

(ii) a hydroxyl- or amino-functional compound having carboxyl or sulphonic acid groups,

(iii) a hydroxyl- or amino-functional compound having carboxylate or sulphonate groups for which the counterions are metal cations of the alkali metal or alkaline earth metal group or ammonium ions, or

(iv) a hydroxyl- or amino-functional compound having ammonium groups obtained from the tertiary amino groups of the compounds (i) by alkylation or protonation.

23. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 17 wherein the softeners is a fatty acid amide, ester quat, quaternary fatty acid amide, betaine, fatty acid sarcoside, aminosilicone, polyethylene wax emulsion or silicone emulsion.

24. A nonfelting wool according to Claim 17 wherein the antislip agent is an anionic or cationic silica sol, blocked isocyanate resin, hydrophilicized isocyanate resin, polyacrylate, or polyvinyl alcohol.

25. A process for the antifelt finishing of wool comprising exposing wool to

(a) a plasma in a pretreatment, followed by

(b) optionally, an aqueous dispersion of self-dispersing isocyanates,

(c) a softener, and

(d) optionally, an antislip agent.

26. A process for the antifelt finishing of wool according to Claim 25 wherein exposure to the aqueous dispersion of self-dispersing isocyanates is effected either batchwise in an exhaust process or continuously by dipping, roll application, padding, application of a mist or spray, or backwasher application.

27. A process for the antifelt finishing of wool according to Claim 25 wherein exposure to the aqueous dispersion of self-dispersing isocyanates and the softener is effected are carried out together and are followed by exposure to the antislip agent.--

IN THE ABSTRACT:

An Abstract has been added as new page 24 as follows:

WOOL WITH ANTIFELT FINISH AND
METHOD FOR PROVIDING AN ANTIFELT FINISH

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention relates to nonfelting wool obtained by exposing wool to

(a) a plasma in a pretreatment, followed by

(b) optionally, an aqueous dispersion of self-dispersing isocyanates,

(c) a softener, and

(d) optionally, an antislip agent.--